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Partisan Praise Won By Rostow After Quiz

By Murrey Marder

Staff Reporter

State Department policy planning chief Walt W. Rostow emerged from a three-hour challenge on the "toughness" of his anti-communism yesterday with Democrats singing his praises and his chief Republican attacker in dissent.

As forecast, the State Department declined to produce for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the new and lengthy study of basic national security policy that set off the inquiry.

Acting Secretary of State George W. Ball, accompanying Rostow, in effect invoked the doctrine of executive privilege in refusing to submit the document or have Rostow answer questions about it.

The document, representing views of several departments, is a "working paper" for the National Security Council. President Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk have not yet studied the report.

Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) told newsmen that documents of this kind must remain confidential, or the whole planning process will suffer.

But Senate Republican Leader Everett M. Dirksen (R-Ill.), who launched the public challenge of Rostow's policy, asserted he will not let the issue rest there.

"This was round number one," said Dirksen. "No fight runs one round, unless there is a knockout."

Dirksen, however, avoided reiterating his original charges. Democrats came away beaming, convinced that the Republicans had found no political pay dirt.

Dirksen on June 18 produced two articles from the Chicago Tribune saying Rostow was the chief sponsor of "a master plan for historic changes in U. S. foreign policy" based on the theme that Soviet policy is "mellowing." Rostow is State Department Counselor and chairman of its Policy Planning Council.

The Republican National Committee publication "Battle Line" joined the attack. Sen. Barry Goldwater (Ariz.) said "the Rostow paper

sounds to me like the most dangerous document in America."

With that political backdrop, the State Department turned out a defense in depth yesterday. In addition to Rostow and Ball, Frederick G. Dutton, Assistant Secretary for Congressional Affairs, and Legal Adviser Abram Chayes appeared.

Barred from discussing the document, Ball and Rostow ranged over foreign policy, with Rostow expounding his own publicized views on grasping opportunities to exploit Communist weaknesses around the world.

Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) exulted afterward: "I wish every American could have heard Walt Rostow these last few hours. They would regard him as a very big, fine American." Said Sen. John J. Sparkman (D-Ala.): "Rostow has done a tremendous job, I think."

Dirksen concentrated on Administration failure to produce the policy study. Dirksen told newsmen that Rostow "on advice of counsel" declined to discuss the "mellowing" issue in the document. Fulbright, however, said Chayes was not asked for legal advice on that point.

Dirksen said "there are some spaces to be filled . . . I still have some concern . . . I am going to get a night's sleep and puzzle over this."

Sen. Goldwater, who along with Dirksen is not a Committee member, reportedly took no part in the questioning. The only comment from Sen. Alexander Wiley (R-Wis.), Committee's ranking Republican, was "Very interesting."

Chairman Fulbright told reporters Rostow gave "very fine" and "most enlightening" answers on policy. "I believe all the members of the Committee benefitted by it," he said. Asked if he found any variance from existing policy, Fulbright replied "none whatever."